Surgeon Removes Flynt's Spleen

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By MARK O'BRIEN

LAWRENCEVILLE, Ga. (AP) — Hustler magazine owner Larry Flynt, shot and critically wounded outside the courthouse where he was being tried on obscenity charges, had his spleen removed today in an effort to control internal bleeding.

Flynt's surgeon was reported to be "very happy with the condition of the patient."

In a four-hour operation immediately after the shooting yesterday, Flynt had parts of both his large and small intestines removed.

Flynt, 34, a pornography millionaire who recently said he had found God with the help of President Carter's evangelist sister, and his local attorney, Gene Reeves Jr., 47, were wounded during a luncheon recess in the trial in this community of 6,000 about 30 miles northeast of Atlanta.

They had been walking back to the courthouse from a cafeteria where they had a grapefruit drink and a salad.

Flynt was shot twice, said assistant hospital administrator Walt Fielding. Reeves was shot in the arm and the side, said Herald Fahringer, a Flynt attorney.

Andrew Jaffee, a vice president of Flynt's business and a spokesman for the family, said the second operation lasted about 2½ hours and that "the procedure did what it intended to do" — control the hemorrhaging.

Jaffee said the surgeon, Dr. Tahier Bagheri, "reported to Mrs. Flynt that he was very happy with the condition of the patient."

Flynt was still listed in critical condition, as was Reeves, said officials at Button Gwinnett Hospital.

John Hughes, hospital administrator, said late yesterday that both men were conscious but were "not strong enough" to talk to police and "too critical to be moved."

Police said they had no suspects. Fahringer said a gunman was seen jumping into a car and speeding off.

A motorist who had been sought for questioning was interrogated last night, but police refused to give details.

Hughes said a bullet from one of the victims was turned over to authorities. He would not reveal its caliber or from which man it was taken.

Larry Flynt

Flynt was visited yesterday by his wife, Althea, 24, and by evangelist Ruth Carter Stapleton, President Carter's sister. Flynt said it was after several visits with Mrs. Stapleton last year that he saw a vision of Christ and underwent a religious conversion while traveling in his pink jet.

Mrs. Stapleton, who had come from her home in Fayetteville, N.C., told reporters yesterday, "I'm just kind of anxious to see how he is."

Fahringer said Flynt recognized his wife and told her, "I'm going to be all right."

Flynt said in a Cincinnati news conference last month that he feared for his life because of his private investigation into the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

Flynt had offered a $1 million reward for information about the slaying, which he believed to be the result of a conspiracy.

Police Chief John Crunkleton said Flynt and Reeves were under guard.

Doug Campbell, Flynt's personal administrator, said Flynt had been optimistic unday that his two-week trial here on charges of distributing obscene materials — specifically the August 1977 issue of Hustler — would produce an acquittal.

After the shooting, Judge G. Hughell Harrison declared a mistrial and dismissed the six-member jury.